

on the grounds that only one sibship, that recorded by Sallmann, is the result of a consanguineous marriage.

Perhaps the chief value of the book lies in the long and carefully authenticated pedigrees proving that in all the German cases there is remote consanguinity between the parents and tracing them to a common ancestor in the seventeenth or early eighteenth century. The one example of direct descent for two generations is clearly due to a marriage between a homozygote and a heterozygote. Pedigrees are also given of dystrophia granulosa and interesting maps of the distribution of these two types in Württemberg. Dr. Bücklers denies the statement of some authors that two types ever occur in the same family. The lattice opacities of dystrophia reticulata are, he says, unrelated to the corneal nerves, a view contrary to that of Mann.

Comparing the three forms he shows that all start in the first decennium and all are bilateral; whereas, however, dystrophia granulosa causes little loss of vision even in late life, dystrophia maculosa progresses rapidly and leads to serious impairment of vision in early adult life making males unfit for military service. In dystrophia reticulata loss of vision is due both to opacity and to irregularity of the surface of the cornea. From the eugenic point of view Dr. Bücklers recommends sterilization of those with dystrophia maculosa and prevention of the marriage of their brothers and sisters with blood relations.

The monograph covers only a limited field, but it has the same kind of value as Sjögren's classical study of juvenile amaurotic idiocy.

E. A. COCKAYNE.

## EDUCATION

**Boyce, E. R.** *Play in the Infants' School.* London, 1938. Methuen. Pp. 188. Price 5s.

ALL who read this graphic description of three years' work in an infants' school in the East End of London will be dissatisfied until the opportunity afforded these few particular children may be ensured for the many in

similar circumstances. It should be read not only by teachers, but by all who care for the future of the child population in the slum areas of our own large cities.

The book tells the story of the transition from a "traditional well-ordered school" to a "child-centred school," where the children were helped to develop through self-education in the stimulating environment that was provided for them, albeit under the most difficult conditions.

Miss Boyce was convinced by previous experience in elementary schools that the only way to real progress was to break away from the traditional method of teaching, and to begin from the children as she found them, using their naïve interests of their own very limited world. With the courage of her convictions, and with the help of a company of enthusiastic young teachers, she proved that an educational ideal could be practically carried out. The school became for these children a place where they found freedom and human understanding; where they could bring their own little problems of living, and where they were shown that their learning was related to their lives.

The school also became a bright spot in the immediate neighbourhood of those sordid Stepney streets, for some of the parents began to gather there to see what their children could do. "I *must* come and see that dense devil act," said one mother when she heard that her son was to be in a play.

One Friday afternoon I was in the school, and the noise of hammering led me to the hall. I found there an out-of-work father making bookshelves, and giving occasional instructions to a group of small boys who were doing some carpentry of their own.

There are many teachers who are faced with much the same problems, and struggling against much the same difficulties, and the frank criticisms of her own methods, the descriptive details of her attempts to introduce the three R's to children with so little background and such limited vocabulary, will be a help and encouragement to them. The book is a description of a specific experiment which has been a real contribution to education.

EDITH B. WARR.